# THE Reconstructionist

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Dedicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of Israel's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

# the Reconstructionist

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THE

# Reconstructionist

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## EDITORIALS

### THE JEWISH CONSPIRACY AND THE JEWISH PROBLEM

SIR Frederick Morgan, the British head of UNRRA, became notorious overnight by his interview with the newsmen, in which he accused the Jews of "plotting" to get out of Europe. It is still not clear whether or not his resignation will have to be submitted. But one thing is clear, and that is that the Jewish displaced persons *want* to get out of Europe and that the Jews of the world *will* do everything in their power to help them. The anti-Semites may declare any organized effort by Jewry a "conspiracy." That will not, however, deter Jewry from going ahead with the job of rescue and rehabilitation.

Tragic it is that Jews are put in the position of having to defend themselves for striving to perform acts of decency and compassion. The world has hardly begun to catch its breath after a titanic war to destroy nazism, and already it is apparent that the spirit of nazism marches on. But as tragic as that circumstance may be, Jews may just as well realize that for them the war is not over, just as for them the war began before it began for the rest of the world. And realizing this, they must close their ranks and mobilize their strength behind the tremendous campaigns of UJA, HIAS and the Zionist movement. They dare not permit the base calumnies of men like Morgan to frighten them. They should advance, confident in the knowledge that it is no sin to hear the cries of their fellow-Jews and to help them.

Unfortunately, however, as so often happens, there is a core of truth in Morgan's remarks, that element of realism which the press permitted to be lost in the clamor over his insulting references to a Jewish conspiracy. It is well to focus upon that portion of his interview which did make sense. He pointed out that the problem of displaced persons is a gigantic one, and a complicated one, and one which is far too difficult for any military government to handle. This fact has not been recognized sufficiently. At present, with hundreds of Jews fleeing from one zone of occupation to another every day, because of persecution, the most the military can do is to receive them—not to turn them back—and to try to feed and house them.

But the essential problem remains. What will be the future of these people? What will become of them? Are they to remain stateless? Are they to be forcibly repatriated? Will they be enabled to go elsewhere? How long can the present set-up continue? The military forces in

Europe certainly cannot be expected to put into effect long-range, permanent programs for hundreds of thousands of men, women and children. Nor should they be permitted to do so even if they could. Americans, at least, have never acquiesced in the opinion that civil matters should be given over to military authorities.

Who, then, shall take over this problem? Obviously, the United Nations Organization. The UNO, to be sure, is just about getting organized; but the constituent members should be made to understand that the problem of the displaced persons of Europe should be high up on the agenda of business, and they should also realize that, in order to be free to carry out whatever plans are formulated, the UNO must have authority to reach decisions regarding the future in Palestine.

And that raises the question of the current "Committee of Inquiry." No Zionist is happy over the fact that the inquiry is taking place. The facts are well known; but, in addition, the inquiry, although it involves the cooperation of the United States, is still unilateral. It proceeds on the assumption that the fate of Palestine and of world Jewry is the responsibility of the British and Americans exclusively. It is actually the responsibility of the entire civilized world, and the UNO should not permit Palestine to be kept outside its scope. If the problem that Morgan raises is to be approached properly by the UNO, Palestine must once again be the concern of all the nations.

We Jews used to get a fairly square deal from the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. When Britain made Palestine virtually a colony, Jews began to suffer. The lesson is quite clear: the displaced persons must not be at the mercy of the military, and Palestine must not be subject to any one or two nations — even if one of the two is our own United States.

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN HIROHITO'S MESSAGE

THE New Year's Rescript of Emperor Hirohito to his people affords much ground for reflection not only by his Japanese subjects but by other peoples of the world as well. In that document he not only renounced the traditional dogma of the divinity of the Emperor of Japan but also the entire mythology on which the Japanese had hitherto based their claim of superiority over all other peoples and the belief in their manifest destiny to rule over others. This is the crucial passage in his message:

"The ties between us and our people have always stood upon mutual trust and affection. They do not depend upon mere legends and myths. They are not predicated on the false conception that the Emperor is divine and that the Japanese people are superior to other races and fated to rule the world."

Whether this message was written on the Emperor's own initiative or he was virtually compelled to write it as the price for being permitted to continue to occupy the throne, the significance of the document remains the same. That significance lies in the recognition that Japan's entry into the concert of civilized nations depends on her abandoning the mythological notion that she is a supernatural people and hence divinely destined to exercise authority over other nations.

To understand the importance of this departure from Japanese religious tradition we must realize that the Japanese civilization is not the only one with a

religious mythology that needs to be renounced. Other civilizations also have their myths which assign to them not merely a unique but a dominant role in human history. Christendom, for example, on the basis of miracle tales recorded in both Testaments of its sacred scriptures, has maintained the doctrine that there is no salvation for men except through Jesus. This made Christians look with contempt on non-Christian civilizations. They regarded the lands of the heathen as places "where every prospect pleases and only man is vile," to quote from a missionary hymn. It is not surprising, therefore, that "Christian" countries found facile rationalizations for imperial domination. Jesus having been a white man, and Christianity having spread primarily among the white peoples, the colored races were regarded as "the white man's burden" and all the cultures and religions of the colored races were treated as pagan superstitions with no claim to respect or reverence. Moslems were equally convinced, on the basis of Arab miracle tales contained in the Koran, that their civilization was destined to rule the world. Their faith was largely spread by "holy" wars, and, in Moslem countries, "infidels" were never voluntarily recognized as entitled to equal rights with the "faithful."

What must trouble us as Jews is the fact that both Christianity and Mohammedanism derive their claims to supernatural spiritual pre-eminence from Jewish Scriptures — plus the New Testament and the Koran respectively. It was the Jewish claim to being the Chosen People, possessed of a unique divine revelation, which first interested the population of the Mediterranean world in Jewish teachings and thus stimulated the birth of Christianity and Mohammedanism with their rival claims to being the one "true" faith. The Jewish people has thus also cherished, on mythical grounds, a conviction of spiritual pre-eminence. True, the Chosen People doctrine was not generally interpreted by our prophets and sages as justifying Jews in the conquest or oppression of other peoples. On the contrary, these religious teachers and leaders inveighed against the more primitive conception of Israel's role in human history. But even they assumed that the salvation of mankind would be achieved through Judaism and the Jewish people, that the consummation of human history would be the day when all nations would accept the Torah that came "from Zion" and the "word of the Lord" as promulgated in Jerusalem. However spiritual such a conception may be, it nevertheless militates against full recognition of the equal legitimacy of all religions, of their equally possessing the potentiality of enabling men to achieve salvation and experience the grace of God.

Is it not time that we, too, learn that loyalty to our people and the spiritual values inherent in its civilization and religion are not dependent on belief in any traditional myths, legends or miracle tales? What a great contribution we would be making to the peace of mankind, if we put ourselves in the forefront of those peoples who abjure mythical pretensions to political or spiritual hegemony! The Jewish heritage is rich enough in religious and ethical values to command the loyal devotion of Jews without resort to that primitive wishful thinking which takes the form of myth and legend. Not that we need be ashamed of the fantasies of our cultural childhood and consign them to oblivion. Childish fantasies are interesting to the mature mind and often afford much food for mature thought. But let us not confuse fancy and fact.

Above all, let us not teach our children to confuse them. Legend and history,

fiction and fact, all have their place in the school curriculum, but the child must be taught to distinguish between them. He must be taught to interpret Jewish mythology and legend in the light of Jewish history, not to misread Jewish history in the light of mythology and legend. Jewish religious teaching would then emphasize the universal fatherhood of God and its corollary, the equal brotherhood of all men, and would renounce the special prerogative of the "first-born son," the claim to inherit a "double portion" of God's spiritual gifts to mankind.

## THE DIGNITY OF LABOR

DAY after day, the American public reads of the strikes spreading throughout industry and the charges and countercharges being hurled by capital and labor against each other. But little attention has been paid to one of the main considerations in judging the question of labor's rights, namely, the need of maintaining the dignity of labor. There is no doubt that among the basic doctrines of the American creed is the dignity of labor. It has also been affirmed by Jewish and Christian spiritual leaders as inherent in the teachings of their religious ethics. Yet religion has contributed little toward giving concrete meaning to the term, *the dignity of labor,* and applying that principle to the issues at stake in the present controversy.

The idea of the dignity of labor has too often been interpreted by religion as implying that all work is dignified. Thus slavery was at one time condoned by the argument that life in this world was of no account except as affording an opportunity of achieving salvation in the world to come. What man did here on earth was worthwhile and dignified only insofar as he accepted his fate and prepared himself for the other world. A slave, therefore, was performing tasks as dignified as the freeman's, when viewed from the standpoint of ultimate salvation. This same interpretation of work served later, during the expansion of industry and the minute specialization of labor, to fashion a docile labor force. Drudgery, which is meaningless work, was given meaning by the theory that each man had a role conferred upon him on earth, for which he would receive his heavenly reward. Meanwhile, it was man's duty to accept his lot in a submissive spirit. In this sense, every type of work was conceived to be dignified; the dignity of the laborer depended on the degree to which he fulfilled his divinely decreed assignment.

Jewish traditon, however, offers many a precedent against such submission to economic tyranny. Jewish law is replete with legislation compelling employers to respect the personality and rights of their employees. But Jews, too, when they had the opportunity, did, nevertheless, not refrain from exploiting labor. We need only to recall the sweatshop days of not so long ago.

In our age, when the interests of men are centered in this world rather than in achieving salvation in the hereafter, the dignity of labor implies that the worker must find worthwhileness and self-fulfillment in work itself. That was achieved to a certain extent in the Middle Ages, when the old guild system developed a sense of pride in workmanship on the part of the worker. But since the industrial revolution, machinery has to a large extent degraded labor. A manufacturer who rules mines, steel mills, machine shops and assembly lines may take pride in his finished product. If it is not the result of the work of his own hands, it may at least be a product of his imagination. Not so the ordinary worker. His task is the ope

on of a gigantic machine. The skill his hands plays little or no part in ping the article. His imagination is er aroused, unless it be to take his nd off the grinding of the wheels.

Under a routine of this kind, the dig- y of labor makes new and different mands. It can be achieved only when worker has a share in management. must participate particularly in deci- ns affecting his own income—in terms merely of money wages but also of rchase power — his economic security l his standard of living.

In the General Motors controversy, the nagement has consistently refused to en its books to enable the union to rk out together with it the basis for ge adjustments. Management has imed that it alone has the right to termine the basis for wages. Even the ommendations of a government com- ttee are completely ignored. To ac- t this attitude is to deny dignity to or. It is to accept its contribution to duction and at the same time not to ognize the laborer as a partner, but treat labor as though it were a mere mmodity. But the laborer invests as much the capitalist in industry. His sweat, initiative where it can be used, often very life, are invested in production. ey certainly mean as much to him and the industry of the nation as the capi- of the employer. To disregard all this co treat the worker as a mere machine the mechanism of production, to rob n of the dignity of his humanity.

Labor has its pride. It has sought a nified status in society as peacefully as could. But the history of the labor vement shows it to have encountered position to requests for decent hours, ges and factory conditions, attacks by lice and brass-knuckled gangsters, and al battles to prevent workers from or- nizing and from bargaining collectively. Every gain that labor has won has been won only at the cost of bitter strife.

Now, again, labor is set to take another step in the direction of a more dignified position. It wants to maintain its collective bargaining rights and make them effective by being given access to all relevant facts. This demand of labor is entirely in keeping with the spirit of true democracy. There is no divine right to rule in industry any more than there is in government.

Those who take the ethical principles of religion seriously must concentrate their attention on the ethical issues involved in this problem. Whether capitalism is at stake, whether labor wants a share in management, whether competitors will know each other's secrets of operation and unit costs — these must be judged in the light of ethical criteria. Any step is justified which will broaden economic democracy, which will raise the living conditions of the majority, which will give workers a greater sense of responsibility, and enable them to develop through their work their best powers of heart, mind and body. Ethical religion must not only keep men's eyes focused on the end of attaining a higher type of humanity; it must endorse the means necessary to the full achievement of human dignity by all men.

## REALITIES AND VALUES

FIVE HUNDRED JEWISH STUDENTS from France, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia and other European lands are going to be brought to the United States on temporary student visas to study at American universities. While in this country they will be housed and cared for by the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation. The plan is an excellent one. These young men and women, who otherwise would have no opportunity to continue

their studies, will benefit greatly from the free atmosphere of America; and American Jewish students ought benefit greatly from contact with these young people. American Jews as a rule make good students; but they are generally pretty naive about the "facts" of Jewish "life." There is no better way for Americans to understand European Jewry, and what it has experienced, than through social intercourse with survivors.

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THE B'NAI B'RITH IS TO BE commended for initiating constructive projects. The Vocational Service Commission is sponsoring a Committee on University Relations. This Committee is engaged in a survey of the policies and practices of American schools with respect to the admission of Jewish students. In cooperation with the ADL, the committee will also investigate anti-Semitism on the campus. There is no doubt that a knowledge of the actual facts will help toward understanding and coping with the situation. In the meantime the Civic Service Department continues to foster ethical attitudes among business and professional groups. Recently a pamphlet was issued entitled "To Do Justly," by Meyer Waxman. This is a brief version of a larger work by the same author. It deserves wide circulation.

▼

WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY maintained that Jewish life and its values can best be conveyed when they are dramatized. A beautiful cantata, or radio play, or concert or dance tells more in a short while than a lengthy debate can ever hope to do. The question, however, has always been: Why can't talented writers write good Jewish plays? The answer generally has been: They would if they thought the plays would ever be produced. Now we learn of the organization of the "American Jewish Theatre" in New York which is on a "playhunt. They are looking for good manuscript We certainly hope the *shidduch* will wor out, that the producers and the play wrights will get together. There is a cry ing need for a vital Jewish theatre. Th Yiddish stage still functions, but its au diences narrow down more and more t the elders. Good luck to the new ente prise!

▼

THE DEATH OF THE REV. D Joseph Herman Hertz, Chief Rabbi the United Hebrew Congregations of th British Empire, will be mourned by Jew all over the world. In the important o fice which he occupied since 1913, represented the Jewish religion and th Jewish people with dignity and fideli A staunch traditionalist, he was neve theless tolerant and cooperative in relations with those who dissented fro his views. Though scholarly and erudi he did not permit himself to be who engrossed in scholastic pursuits but i jected himself into all the struggles of people for security, freedom and creati opportunity in Eretz Yisrael and throug out the world. He was a true "disci of Aaron," one "who loved peace a pursued peace, who loved his fellowm and drew them near to the Torah." commentary on the Pentateuch prese an interpretation of the text that corre many misunderstandings and reveals abiding value and perennial relevance its message. Like Rashi's famous comm tary, Dr. Hertz's helps the reader to derstand the text in the light of the h thoughts which it evoked in the Jew mind from age to age. His most rec work in popular religious education his commentary on the Prayer Bo This we have not yet seen and so c not discuss. But his having undertaker write it is further indication of his

(*Continued on Page* 23)

# Design for a Jewish Community Council*

By SIGMUND TAFT

THE American Jewish Community as a result the decimation of the Jews of Europe emerged as the prime factor in the servation of Jewish life throughout the ld. A study of Jewish history indicates the area of the greatest concentra- of Jews has always produced the l point of Jewish existence. American ry, at present 5,000,000 strong, num- close to one-half of the Jews of the ld. Surely it behooves American Jewry eek out and effectuate a type of com- nal organization which will insure the oric, positive evolution of the Jewish ple. Fortunately, the job of communal ganization facing American Jewry s not have to be based on entirely new untried principles. The history of ish communal evolution gives us nu- ous clues which point out, to a large nt, the path to be followed. Let us ew some of those clues.

fter the fall of Jerusalem the Jews e use of their former national ex- ences in self-government and com- nity organization. With characteristic ptability, they succeeded in continu- their way of life, with minor changes, foreign soil.

### Characteristics of the Medieval Jewish Communities

In the *galut,* the Jews lived in countries ruled in diverse ways. Nevertheless, when we review the Jewish communal structure throughout the dispersion, a number of common factors stand out. These may be listed as follows:

1. *Democracy.* The Jewish communities were in general as democratic at any particular time as the most progressive non-Jewish community. Even if an autocratic form of government prevailed, it was challenged by an aristocracy of learning, and education was available to all, regardless of financial or social status. Furthermore, in many of the Jewish communities of the pre-Emancipation era a real measure of democracy existed, with popular elections and with laws decided upon by the entire Jewish community.

2. *The leadership of the Jewish community served as the responsible voice of that community.* No single organization or individual was free to issue a statement to the non-Jewish community without the consent of the leaders of the *kehillah.* The outer world, on its part, dealt with the chosen leadership of the Jewish community. From time to time it was necessary to debate theology and other matters pertaining to Jewish status and rights with the non-Jewish world at open meetings. In these instances it was the chosen leaders of the community who presented the case for the Jews.

3. *Philanthropy* was a function of the entire Jewish community. Taxes were levied upon each member by the community and were doled out in accordance with the need. The community as a whole maintained hospitals and other philanthropic institutions.

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This article was written in the hope that ould, to some extent, clarify the objectives activities of the existing and proposed ish Community Councils. The term Jewish mmunity Council is used in the sense of a tral community organization. In some com- nities the Community Council has become the tral community organization, whereas in ers the Federation or Welfare Fund is. nevertheless have used the term Jewish mmunity Councils because a majority of munities have applied this name to the ncies they have created to serve as their tral community agency.

4. *Jewish education* might be termed the crux of Jewish existence from ancient times until the pre-Emancipation era. A Jew never stopped learning. Rich and poor alike studied Jewish law, traditions, and customs from early youth until old age. The synagogue was the center of learning. Here Jews gathered, after the day's work was completed, to discuss and interpret the vast number of Jewish tomes which had been passed down to them through the centuries. It can be truly stated that this widespread learning was one of the basic factors in keeping the torch of Israel lighted through the ages.

5. *The responsibility of the Jew* to his community raised no problems in the days of the *kehillah*. A Jew was born into the community and had to assume his obligations toward it. Membership in the community was mandatory. Only by being excommunicated, which was a rare phenomenon, or by signing a legal document renouncing his Judaism "for religious scruples" could a Jew be relieved of his communal responsibilities. In such a case he was physically removed from the community. A Jew, as a matter of course, paid his taxes to the Jewish community, worshiped three times a day in a synagogue, and sent his children to obtain a Jewish education. This mandatory way of life no doubt contributed to the stability of the Jewish community of the past.

6. *Jewish Self-Discipline.* In the *kehillah* of the pre-Emancipation era Judaism was the total way of life of the Jew. To live a Jewish life meant to observe certain standards of conduct. The precepts of the Jewish religion governed the behavior of each member of the Jewish community. These included standards of ethical behavior. Unethical business practices and other deeds which might bring shame upon the Jewish community were rare, not because they might endanger relationships between Jews and non-Jews, but primaril because they violated the standards o the community.

7. *Over-all planning* by the leaders wa a feature of the European *kehillah*. Th ghetto communities were extra-lega Consequently the management of th affairs of the community rested, to a ver large extent, in Jewish hands. This re sulted in planning to meet the problem of the community on an over-all basi After the needs were ascertained, taxe were levied to meet the financial cos All communal problems were met in th fashion, whether they involved Jewis education, religious matters, general civi and communal needs, or philanthropy.

8. *Most of Jewish litigation was re solved by Jewish courts.* Rarely did matter involving a dispute between Jew ish organizations or individuals come b fore the public courts. This meant th juridical matters which could be emba rassing to the Jewish community were n on display before courts which might n understand the issues or be sympathet to the interests involved.

The end of the eighteenth century wi nessed the coming of the industrial rev lution and the granting of civil and po tical rights to the Jews of Western E rope. The ghetto gates were thrown ope In order to enjoy the privilege of fi citizenship in the countries in which th were residing, the Jews had to relinqui the local autonomy so long exercise They did so more or less willingly. Th explains why the Jews of the Unit States, while remaining loyal to the ligious practices and ethical concepts Judaism, entered fully into the politic civic and cultural life of the coun without making provision for their o communal organization.

## Beginnings of Communal Organization in America

For a long time, it looked as if Am can Jewry would break with the *kehil*

adition and be content to remain a con-
omeration of small isolated groups.
here were, of course, many difficulties
the way of Jews' uniting on a common
atform. The heterogeneous character
the Jewish population, its unprece-
nted growth, due to a constant influx of
nmigrants, the strained relationship that
isted for many years between the Ger-
an and East-European Jews, the eco-
omic adjustment which absorbed the
ntire attention of the vast majority of
ie new settlers and left little time for
inking about communal needs, the
*andsmanschaft* tendency to segregation
—all these represented the forces that
ept the *kehillah* idea in abeyance. How-
ver, none of these difficulties is insu-
erable. The melting pot process within
ie Jewish community has been going on
eadily, and external pressures have
elped to weld Jewish interest and to de-
elop Jewish community consciousness.

The beginning of the 20th century wit-
essed the establishment of several *kehil-
t* in the larger cities of this country,
ith the one in New York City attracting
ie most attention. None of these *kehillot*
sted more than a decade. The general
easons for their failure may be listed as
llows: 1) the complexity of their or-
anizational set-up, 2) the insufficiency
professional leadership, 3) the unde-
ocratic structure, 4) the heterogeneous
ewish population, 5) the too inclusive
rogram.

At the same time less inclusive co-
rdinating organizations appeared upon
ie horizon of the Jewish communal
ene. Among the most important of these
ordinating bodies were Federations,
elfare Funds, Jewish Community Cen-
rs, and Bureaus of Jewish Education.

The past fifteen years have witnessed
real growth in Jewish communal feel-
ng and in Jewish community organiza-
on. What are some of the reasons for
is new trend?

The organized hostility to Jews instigated by Nazi Germany as a fundamental policy has brought to the forefront of Jewish interest throughout the world the basic problem of the relation of Jews to other elements in the population. The civil and social status of the Jew is gravely menaced. In our country the rapid rise of anti-Semitic agitation led many Jews who previously had never been identified with any Jewish affairs to an active participation in civic-protective work and broader forms of Jewish communal organization.

Another reason for the successful growth of communal organization is the fact that the Jewish population is steadily becoming more homogeneous. The separatist tendencies of the benevolent *Landsmanschaften* have been eliminated with the fading of these "land of origin" organizations from the American scene. The present Jewish population has been here long enough to learn the American language and acquire American mores.

The nationwide joint efforts of Jews, by cutting across the various religious groupings and social and economic levels, have also assisted the tendency toward unity of American Jewry. Among these nationwide efforts are the various defense activities, overseas aid and Zionism.

### The Organization of Jewish Community Councils

The establishment of the Jewish Community Council on a large scale as a unique form of Jewish communal organization in this country began some fifteen years ago, in consequence of the rise of sentiment for an integrated Jewish community. Although the Jewish Community Council varies in form from community to community it can be safely said that the average Jewish Community Council aims to be the central democratic organization for Jewry in a particular

community, with the dual major functions of preserving and integrating Jewish life and of combating anti-Semitism. Jewish Community Councils now exist in some forty-five communities throughout the country and concern themselves mainly in four major areas. These are:

1. *Unity in Jewish Life.* This does not mean uniformity. Unity does not call for sameness in worship or theology; it allows for differences in concepts and practices of Jewish living. But unity does mean the joining of all Jewish groups and individuals, regardless of differences, in those areas of interest which affect all Jews, whether they be Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform, Zionist, non-Zionist or anti-Zionist, members of labor organizations, fraternal orders or any other form of Jewish association. Unity means that, while each Jewish group is free to follow its own aims and objectives where these do not interfere with the good of the community as a whole, in matters which affect general and common Jewish interests, all Jewish groups must join together even if to do so demands a limitation of the autonomy of the constituent groups.

2. *Positive Group Survival.* A study of the American Jewish scene will show the dangers which threaten the positive evolution of Judaism. In a recent poll conducted by the Denver University National Opinion Research Center, it was learned that only "18 per cent of the Jewish people attended synagogue at least once a month. This contrasts with 65 per cent of Protestant and 83 per cent of Catholic church-goers." The apathy of Jews towards Jewish education and Jewish culture presents a most serious problem. No more than 25 per cent of Jewish children at any one time receive a Jewish education and those children who do attend a Jewish school remain for too short a period to gain more than a smattering of Jewish history, culture, and modern Jewish life.

With regard to Jewish cultural activity in general, the market for Jewish literature, Jewish art, Jewish music, etc., is practically non-existent. A talented Jewish author, a composer or painter with a burning desire to make use of Jewish themes would hesitate to do so because of the lack of an audience. The Jewish home which contains Jewish books, pictures, music is all too rare.

Another criterion of Jewish group living is the total membership of Jewish organizations. Here again the picture is a sad one. Estimates indicated that many Jews do not belong to any Jewish organization. To this may be added the fact that the leadership of some of our Jewish organizations is in the hands of a few active persons and that the large mass of their membership plays a passive rather than an active role.

3. *Combating anti-Semitism and Promoting Interfaith and Interracial Good Will.* During the past fifteen years which saw the backwash of Hitlerism against American shores, numerous Jewish organizations took steps to improve interfaith and racial amity and to eliminate anti-Semitic incidents. These efforts, although entirely sincere, failed, for two reasons, to provide for the maximum results in combating the spread of religious hatred. Firstly, in the haste to do something about the problem, they used methods which were untested and which were not supervised by trained personnel. Secondly, there was much duplication of effort by the various agencies in some areas, and no work at all was attempted in other areas. The general public was thoroughly confused with the welter of activities conducted by defense organizations. More and more Jews are, therefore, coming to the realization that one central agency in each community is necessary to combat anti-Semitism most

tively and to build good-will among men.

4. *Over-all Planning.* In order to meet serious dilemma of current Jewish , over-all planning is an absolute ne- sity. A survey of the Jewish communi- s in this country indicates that a large jority have not planned their institu- ns and other forms of Jewish commu- life in an adequate over-all pattern. the other hand, much duplication ex- ; and non-productive and outmoded in- tutions continue from year to year. hen a particular issue or problem ches the eye of Jewry, several organ- tions and institutions often make some empt at its solution.

Over-all planning in any community be- ns with a study of the problems which ncern Jews. Subsequently, a picture is tained of the Jewish community in its cality, showing the currently existing in- tutions, their aims and functions. After e necessary information is acquired and e remedies adequately thought through, e communal planning agency coordi- tes and gives direction to activities uching on general problems.

### emocracy in the Jewish ommunity Council

One of the reasons for the establish- ent of the Jewish Community Council s been the lack of democracy in those ganizations in control of Jewish affairs. ccusations have been leveled at central odies that they are controlled by a few fluential persons rather than by the tal community. Consequently, the de- ocratic process must be faithfully ad- ered to in the Jewish Community Coun- l. All committees and central agencies the Jewish Community Council should e composed of as wide a representation s possible from the affiliated organiza- ons. The Jewish community at large ould be kept informed of all Council ctivities at frequent intervals so that un- derstanding and discussion of all issues will ensue.

In order to arrive at decisions based on true majority opinion, the Jewish Community Council must include representatives of all Jewish organizations and individuals who believe in the cultural survival of Jewry, no matter from what angle they approach Jewish problems. Minorities must be given full opportunity to state their case. Only in this fashion can the Council be recognized as the true voice of Jewry.

The Jewish Community Council should provide for as much participation in its activities as possible by the Jews of the community. To activate only delegates of organizations is to narrow the scope and the recognition of the Jewish Community Council. Whenever possible, assignments should be made on a broad basis, using different persons on each occasion. This participation will lead not only to a greater understanding of the Jewish Community Council but also to wider publicity, to greater organizational affiliation and to a widespread feeling of responsibility which will insure the Council's success.

A good deal of thought has been given by persons interested in the growth and development of Jewish Community Councils to the question of structural formation. At present the organizational structure of the Jewish Community Council differs in various communities. In the large concentrations of population the governing body of the Jewish Community Council usually consists of representatives from all the Jewish organizations.*

* In Brooklyn, N. Y., where over one million Jews reside, the total area has been divided into eight sections each one of which has a local Jewish Community Council. The eight local Councils are united in the Brooklyn Jewish Community Council. An individual Jewish organization is affiliated with the local Council in its area and consequently with the Brooklyn Jewish Community Council.

In the intermediate and small Jewish communities, the Jewish Community Council usually takes one of two forms. The first is organizational representation as in the large communities and the second is a combination of organizational representation and individual membership.

### The Structure of the Council and Its Relations to Other Bodies

Opinions advanced as to the best structural formation of the Jewish Community Council have included the following: 1) the elimination of existing Jewish organizations with individual Jews becoming members of the Jewish Community Council; 2) organizational representation but no individual membership—unaffiliated persons would be urged to join one of the existing Jewish organizations; 3) a combination of group and individual membership; 4) a Council built around the Jewish Community Center as its focal point.

*It seems that no one formula is applicable to all Jewish communities. The Jewish Community Council's structure will vary with the size of the Jewish population and the particular communal pattern which exists.* Undoubtedly the Jewish Community Center has a vital role to play in the development of the Council. Perhaps a Council pattern which includes individual membership is feasible but it seems that this should be attempted only after a real campaign has been undertaken to affiliate all Jews with some existing Jewish organization.

In regard to fund raising and distribution of funds for Jewish local, national and overseas needs, the situation varies with each community. Many communities have set up central fund raising and distributing bodies whereby the major financing problems are met once during the year. In some communities, the Jewish Community Council performs this function. In others it is performed by th Federation or Welfare Fund. In stil others the Jewish communal agencies ar financed by a non-sectarian Communit Chest.

The relationship of the Jewish Com munity Councils to the Federations an Welfare Funds varies. Some Jewish Com munity Councils receive their total finan cial needs from Federation; others voic community opinion on fund distributio for the benefit and guidance of the Fed eration and Welfare Fund; in still othe instances, the Federation and Jewis Community Council are completel divorced except for a possibly overlappin directorate.

It is optional with any Jewish orgar ization whether it shall become affiliate with a Jewish Community Council, c not. Even after affiliation, it has a righ to differ with a majority decision and t express its own desires both in thoug and action. The only control the Jewis Community Council possesses is its mor prestige based on universal represent tion and the fact that its decisions a arrived at only after full discussion an majority consent.

There is no better agency for the d velopment of communal leadership tha the Jewish Community Council. Its lea ers should be chosen after they have di played a knowledge of the Jewish pa and present and of communal affairs an an ability to get things accomplished. Council work, representatives from a Jewish organizations are tested and th best leadership material is sifted out.

Isolationism still exists in Jewish li Charges have been made and substan ated that synagogue members are inte ested only in their own congregation, th some Zionists are not concerned wi the American Jewish community, th defense organizations care little abo other phases of Jewishness, that Refor Conservative and Orthodox Jews have

mmon meeting ground. The Jewish mmunity Council, through its com- unal projects, should give the individu- Jew a picture of the totality of the wish community and a feeling of entity with it. This knowledge and in- mate contact would eventually create a tter understanding, respect and coopera- on among all Jews.

### e Over-all Program the Council

The Jewish Community Council, in or- r to accomplish its purpose, has to en- ge in a program of over-all activities. should be stressed that the Jewish Com- unity Council should undertake no ac- vity which is in reality the function of me particular organization in the com- unity. For example, if the Jewish edu- ational system in a community is inade- uate to meet local needs, then the Jew- h educational institutions should be rengthened instead of setting up a new gency under Council auspices. There e, however, areas of programming hich are community-wide, outside the cope of any individual organization, and onstitute the specific domain of the Jew- h Community Council.

Listed below are some of the major reas of activity which are within the cope of the Jewish Community Council.

1. The Jewish Community Council hould act as the voice of the Jewish ommunity. This means that no one or- anization or individual may speak for he Jewish community but rather that he total democratic will of the Jewish ommunity should be expressed by the Council. The local Jewry will thus have n address, and civic and governmental gencies will know whom to contact if hey desire to reach the Jewish com- munity. Participation of Jewry in worth- while governmental and civic efforts will hereby be facilitated.

2. Many Jews are indifferent to things Jewish. It is only the organized total Jewish community which can cope with this problem. In order to bring large numbers of indifferent Jews into the Jew- ish fold an all-out campaign is necessary. Such a campaign should include profes- sional advertising techniques, intensive in- dividual solicitation and other methods which are best put into operation by the entire community.

One of the ways a Jew expresses his connection with his people is by mem- bership in some Jewish organization. The Jewish Community Council should strong- ly urge every Jew to join an organiza- tion of his choosing whether religious, fraternal, Zionist, philanthropic, or one of a different nature. The Jewish Com- munity Council should consider a per- son's joining a Jewish organzation as his having taken the first step toward recog- nizing his responsibility to the Jewish community.

3. The task of combating anti-Semit- ism and bettering interfaith relations is another project which needs the combined thinking and action of the total Jewish community. Inept handling of "incidents" by inexperienced individuals can serve only to complicate a bad situation. Steps taken to improve interfaith relations must be constantly tested as to their reliability and validity. Successful extension of inter- faith amity must make use of the tech- niques of the psychiatrist, psychologist, educator, and sociologist and of a thor- ough knowledge of the Jewish past and present.

4. The primary tools which can forge Jewish survival, on a high religious and ethical plane, are Jewish education and culture. The present status of Jewish edu- cation and its cultural manifestations are at such a low level that the future of Jewish group life is threatened. Apart from anti-Semitism the lack of in- terest in Jewish education presents the foremost challenge to the future of

Jewry. All Jews who are concerned with the perpetuation of Judaism must take cognizance of this vital problem on which total action can no longer be delayed.

Without a more intensive and extensive program of Jewish education and culture, positive Jewish life cannot continue indefinitely. To explore the methods of intensifying and expanding Jewish education and culture is surely within the purview of the Jewish Community Council. Jewish schools for children must be strengthened and given their proper status in the Jewish community; adolescents should be reached through their group affiliations; and adults should not only be informed of things Jewish, but should be encouraged to live Jewishly through their Jewish organizations, by celebrating Jewish holidays and in other ways. A suitable over-all project in the field of Jewish culture might be arranged in the form of an exhibit of Jewish art, or a concert of Jewish music. The Jewish Community Council bears the final responsibility for the renascence of Jewish education and culture, although the immediate responsibility for concretizing these aims may rest with a Board of Jewish Education, a Jewish Education Committee of the Council, or a Jewish Community Center.

The Council, in order to make itself more effective and understood by the community, should see to it that all courses on Jewish education include some sessions on the subject of the Jewish community. These sessions should be offered to all age groups and should include the idea of an integrated communal pattern, its make-up, and the responsibility of all Jews to it.

5. The question of internal Jewish discipline should be put upon the agenda of the Jewish Community Council. This involves making the individual Jew feel that by unethical acts he is lowering the dignity of the entire Jewish community. The organized Jewish community should require the individual to live up to its standards in order to preserve the integrity of the community and his own good name.

6. One of the things very much needed by the average Jewish organizations is assistance with the programming of meetings and special events. In many cases meetings are not as interesting as they might be. The meetings, furthermore, are in most instances devoid of Jewish content. Card playing, or lectures on matters not related to Jewish life make up the program of altogether too many Jewish organizations. Here the Council has a vital role to perform. Each Jewish organization should be asked to select a Program Chairman who would be responsible for planning its meetings. The Council should conduct institutes for these Program Chairman at which the problems of planning a meeting and other events might be profitably discussed. The Council should also place in the hands of these Program Chairmen resource material. Such material might consist of lists of available speakers and entertainers; suitable motion pictures and radio recordings, programs for the celebration of Jewish and civic holidays, plays, inter-faith and interracial programs, etc.

7. Another function might be termed community studies. Such studies should include taking a census of the Jewish population, ascertaining the number of Jews who are not affiliated with any Jewish organization and any other survey which involves the total Jewish community. Such a survey should be undertaken by the Council only where no agency exists which is devoted to that particular field of endeavor. In an area where a particular agency functions, the survey should be made by such agency *under the aegis of the Council.* In that manner, the community at large will maintain an interest in the survey and will be better

repared for concrete action upon its onclusion.

8. Litigation involving matters of a ewish nature is often best kept out of ie public courts. The Jewish Commun-y Council is therefore obligated to estab-sh an Arbitration Court to which Jews nd Jewish organizations may submit dis-utes, confident that they will be andled with understanding and will be ept out of the public eye. Decisions ade by such an Arbitration Court are onsidered legally binding.

9. Fund-raising and distribution are wo of the important functions of the ewish community. The monies raised nd disbursed provide the wherewithal or the functioning of the agencies estab-shed to meet all Jewish needs.

Where the Council is not itself the und-raising and disbursing argency, it hould be in a position to advise the local Federations and Welfare Funds as to the ommunity's opinion with regard to the listribution of funds. The Federations nd Welfare Funds should look to the Council for such guidance. An instance where such opinion might prevail is in he case of percentage allocation of unds. The Council in such an instance hould express the community's opinion s to the allocation.

10. The Jewish Community Council hould support and work with those civic orces in the community which aim at ommunity betterment, though not at the expense of its specifically Jewish activities. Civic projects which should concern the Council are those, for example, involving better housing, more adequate parks, in-crease of transit facilities, and other such projects which make the community a better place to live in.

11. The establishment of a device usu-ally known as a Community Calendar helps to avoid confusion and overlapping in the scheduling of events by the local Jewish organizations. The Jewish Community Council keeps the Community Calendar, and affiliated organizations clear date and place before an event is finally determined upon.

12. From time to time problems of a general nature arise which call for the attention of the Jewish Community Council, such, for example, as providing for the needs of the returning Jewish veteran at the present time or for the influx of Jewish refugees which occurred a few years ago. This does not mean to imply that the Jewish Community Council should undertake to deal directly with the individual or group problems of the veteran or refugee. It does mean that such matters, if they are to be properly dealt with, require a community approach. For example, in dealing with the Jewish veteran, the Jewish Community Council should call together all interested agencies and organizations which might in any way be helpful. After ample discussion each agency takes responsibility for the area it is best fitted to engage in, the hospitals to take care of the sick, the case work agency of family problems, the vocational agency of guidance and employment, etc. A central point of intake is established if this is felt to be necessary. All the organizations then pool their resources and allocate any special problem to one agency or establish a new facility for its solution.

The Jewish Community Council would be derelict in its duty if it did not propose to establish, as soon as feasible, a Jewish Youth Council modelled after the adult Council, for the purpose of coordinating all youth activties and inducting youth into the service of the community. Such a Youth Council should be composed of all the Jewish Youth groups. It should be an autonomous body, but should receive the financial support of

the adult Jewish community. Furthermore, adult advisors should be available for consultation.

The Jewish Community is the reflection of Jewish life. A thriving, well-ordered Judaism will produce an integrated, responsible forward-looking communal organism. It is incumbent upon all elements of Jewry to unite in this common effort, on which may depend, to a large extent, the ability of Jewry to survive and to make a distinctive contribution to human civilization. The Jewish Community Council, a relatively new form of cooperative action still in its experimental stage, may with strong and farsighted leadership be the answer to this vexing problem.

# "Inner Immigration"

By ERNST FRANKENSTEIN

UNTIL a few years ago the future of Eretz Yisrael depended mainly on political developments. Politics apart, we had only to acquire the land and select from the masses of prospective immigrants the best qualified people. Nothing but politics seemed to prevent us from becoming, in the course of time, the firmly established majority and from thus fulfilling the only legal condition for the creation of the Jewish State.

### Effect of European Catastrophe On Zionist Prospects

The European catastrophe has radically changed the situation. More than one-third of our people have perished, and we have lost precisely that section which was the least assimilated and was an almost inexhaustible reservoir of man and woman power for the building up of Palestine. Our enemies have not been slow to exploit this disaster for their own purposes. With hardly veiled satisfaction they are propagating the new argument that large-scale immigration will no longer be needed as the pressure of the suffering millions has ceased. No doubt, they are wrong in every respect. The conditions in liberated Europe and the far-from-enviable position of the Jews in most Moslem countries compel us to transfer, with the utmost speed, hundreds of thousands to Palestine. Yet, not this is the problem. We do not want only to create a haven of refuge for the persecuted. We demand for ourselves that right which is not denied to any other people, the right to live our own life in our own land, in Palestine. The European disaster does not diminish but, on the contrary, only accentuates this right.

As, however, Palestine is not inhabited only by Jews the fulfilment of our wishes depends, practically and legally, on securing a clear and permanent majority of the population. If the political obstacles were removed we would achieve this majority probably within a few years. Yet will we be able to maintain it in face of the great natural increase of the Arabs, the low Jewish birth rate and the loss of backing by European Jewry? It is on the solution of this problem that our future depends.

### Wanted—a Population Policy For the Yishuv

It requires, like most Jewish problems, an unconventional approach and unconventional methods. Up to now we have concentrated our efforts on re-building the land. We have forgotten that the strength of a state depends not only on a flourishing land but just as much on

ıd and numerous population, and on adequate birth rate. We pride our-es on our women pioneers, and forget it is more important for them to e many children than to do the work men.

Ve know the objections. The average ple is deterred from having many dren by the uncertainty about the re of Palestine and their own fate, the difficulty of providing the means maintaining a large family and the popular belief in the advantages mall families. The first of these three acles will be removed, we hope, by avorable decision about the future of estine. But the two others remain and become even more formidable in the cult years of post-war settlement. To come them we need a complete re-al of our population policy, if such cy exists at all.

### rmality in the Evaluation of therhood

ll our efforts aim at restoring our ple to normal conditions. It would be ateful mistake to confine this to ma-al values. We need the restoration to ral normality just as much. Small ilies are signs of decay and not, as are told, the beneficial outcome of her civilization. Of course, in a world ruthless materialism and individual-every child burdens the family budget curtails the freedom of the parents. it is exactly the resistance to these ten-cies and the readiness for sacrifice in service of higher ideals which have pired our best efforts. The *kevutzah* is Jewish answer to materialism and in-idualism. This greatest social experi-nt of modern times needs only to be ught to its logical conclusion, its spirit be instilled into the whole people. The ure of our land depends on the toil our men; the future of our people, on the mother instinct of our women. Only a mentally and morally corrupt age could conceive the fantastic idea that motherhood means slavery, and that woman's emancipation consists in her competition with man. We cannot undo the work of nature without destroying ourselves; the decrease of the birth-rate which alarms statesmen is the danger signal.

Yet our own attitude towards motherhood is still determined by Western materialism and individualism, though in all other respects, our pioneers oppose these defects of Western civilization with their own idealism and collective effort. Our women share this idealism and readiness for sacrifice. We only have to assign them their proper task without curtailing their freedom or imposing on them burdens beyond those inherent in the mysterious work of nature. Not toil on the land or in the factories but motherhood must be the Jewish woman's main part in the building-up of land and people.

### Facilitating the Change to Larger Families

It is up to us not only to create the new morality which gives the mother an elevated position, but to secure the necessary material conditions. We may consider, for instance, a woman's compulsory service for one or two years, possibly after leaving school. All women should be trained in everything connected with the care of children, should serve in hospitals, nurseries and similar institutions, and should assist the nurses and mothers in the *kevutzot* and possibly in private homes too. We should aim at a system under which the bringing up of children should be the task of the community, and the lonely and problematic child and the overburdened mother should be figures of the past.

All this, however, will remain utopian as long as we are unable to solve the fin-

ancial problem. It can be solved—in a very unorthodox way, by a combination of the highest ethics with practical work. It is an old religious command that a man has to marry the childless widow of his brother lest his brother's name be extinguished. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish families have perished at the hands of murderers and will be extinguished unless we give the old command a new significance. There will be hardly one Jew who has not lost a relative or friend. It should be his moral duty to revive the name of the murdered family in a way worthy of our people and its martyrs.

We should create a system of individual and collective "adoption" of Palestinian families. The "adopted" family should add to its name the name which the adopter wants to revive, while the adopter would undertake to assist the family in the bringing-up of children by payment of annuities for every child. As the vast majority would hardly be in a position to bear the burden of a large family, a number of adopters should unite for the collective adoption of a family. One could even think of whole communities adopting a *kevutzah*. The financial arrangements should be made and permanently controlled by a special public board while the connection of the adopter with a particular family would serve to strengthen the bonds between the diaspora and Palestine. This is, of course, no more than a rough idea; the details need careful consideration by experts.

### The Seriousness of the Situation

Yet, whatever we may think of this o other projects, we need a radic change in our population policy if w do not want to endanger the future o our people and our land. We cann over-emphasize the seriousness of the si uation. Even if, in the course of the ne 10 years, we succeed in bringing one mi lion people to Palestine, as proposed b the Jewish Agency, we will not be sa For the Arab natural increase of abo 30,000 (3 per cent) a year and the immigration which we will hardly be ab to stop completely, will have brought t Arab population to about 1½ milli and leave us with a very precarious m jority, if it will be a majority at all. W will, of course, have further immigratio But to rely on it is not a sound poli We need the greatest possible "inner i migration" through natural increase. T physical and psychological conditions a more than favorable. We have a num ous, strong and happy youth, full idealism and confidence. We only ha to free them from the unsound Weste conception of the woman's task, and fr their justified economic preoccupatio and restore the old Jewish ideal of large family. If we succeed in combin this ideal with the revival of the mem of the martyred masses we would sec the greatest trimph over our enemies a prove once again that the spirit is stro er than the strongest material forces.

# Book Notes

## A WORLD ILLUMINATED BY LIGHTED CANDLES

*VENDICKE LICHT, By Bella Chagall, with drawings by Marc Shagall. Book League of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, I.W.O., New York,* 1945, 243 *pp.*

THIS book consists of a series of autobiographical sketches. The autobiographical element is almost and unobtrusive and lends a quality of warmth and intimacy to the real subject-matter of the sketches — Jewish life especially family life, in a fair-sized Russian city, in the first decade of this century.

The book is called *Lighted Candles,* and the symbolism of the title suits the mood of the stories and has, perhaps, a double meaning. The title refers to the lighted candles on the writer's table, as in the middle years, not long before her untimely death, after her many wanderings, she sought to recapture the Sabbath holiness of earlier and more serene days. It refers also to the lighted candles on our darkened tables shedding some rays on a darkened world, and turning our thoughts to the "eternal aspect" of that world, to those Jewish values which can endure in a new climate and a new environment. Obviously then *Lighted Candles* is a "romantic" book; there is a strong feeling of nostalgia running through it. But it is not a romanticism of "escape"; it does not represent an attempt to run away from the contemporary scene with its coercions and problems and to take refuge in the remote and distant. It is, in a profound sense, a "realistic" book too, and its romanticism does not stand over against its realism. It is realistic because the author knew her themes and subject-matter to the finest detail, because she wrote of a world that was inseparable from her experiences as a child and young girl, because it was almost a part of herself. It is, therefore, an honest book and cannot be regarded as a flight from life but as a sort of "prolegomenon" to life, to the shaping of an ordered Jewish life—individual and communal—in America.

This would also explain why the author chose to write the book in the language of her childhood, in Yiddish. As these memories crowded her mind and imagination, they ceased to be a mere remembering and became a *re-living,* and the experiences could not be separated from the language in which they were embodied. Without the language, they would be shadows, an intellectual effort to disentangle their historic content; with the language, they were whole and unimpaired, historic and poetic, with all the poignancy and all the preserved freshness of their first impact.

What is this world that Bella Chagall describes for us? What are the experiences she is recalling? Some of the chapter-titles are: Sabbath, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, The First Snow, A Hanukkah Lamp, The Store, Purim Actors, The Seder, Elijah, A Wedding. Almost imperceptibly this world is reconstructed and we are able to see it with its sunshine and its shadows, with its joys and its sorrows. It is a Jewish world that would not seem to differ much from ours;

here, too, there are children and parents with their disparate little universes; here, too, there are work and worry and business; here, too, there are holidays, games and forgetfulness; here, too, there are loyalties and love and kindess. And yet, there is a difference. The difference does not lie in the fact that this world had few signs of modern technology, that it was a part of Czarist Russia. All that is important. The essential characteristic of this world is more significant; it still possessed tradition, folkways, a vital heritage; its *present* was not discrete and isolated, it was in continuity with its *past,* a summing up of its past. Its people may not have had an adequate knowledge of history as chronology, as the succession and location of events; their absorption of history into their *present,* their investment of holidays and the daily ritual of living with the hopes and meanings —the tears and laughter—of the past, was itself history-making.

And yet there is a note of intense poignancy in these sketches. The world that Bella Chagall is depicting was still whole and integrated, but the rift between tradition and the "new ways," between the ordered life of yesterday and the confusions of the contemporary scene, between the certainties of the past and the undirected gusto of the present, was already in the making. The new was breaking in upon the old and, there are signs here that it was also breaking up the old. Bella's brother does not go to *heder,* but to a Russian school, and his Jewish education is now a private matter, an after-school affair. The family is no longer an indissoluble unit and its members are separate individuals — without necessarily having achieved individuality — going their own paths. The Sabbath, holidays, and folk-customs retain as yet their spiritual and dramatic effectiveness, but they are beginning to take on an "exotic" quality, and are no longer its comp fulfilment and consummation. In br the movement of Jewishness toward a membrance of things past has appare started; it is ceasing to be *organic* related to the fateful life of the Jew.

Therein lies the merit of Bella C gall's book for American Jews. On one hand, there is in it a picture o Jewish communal life that still enab the Jew to live an ordered and, in t sense, a dignified and harmonious l on the other hand, there is the imp suggestion here that life cannot st still, that the meeting of the Jewish m and Western culture has wrought g changes in the social and intellectual look of the Jew, and that, hence, a "s thesis" must be attained, a mode of li —without tension—in "two civilizatio must be achieved.

It should be quickly added, that B Chagall's sketches are descriptive poetic, and that at no point are they cursive; it is because they are poetic devoid of "pleading" or "rationalizat that one is led to these conclusions.

*Lighted Candles* should not, theref be regarded merely as a "historic ord," as a "chronicle" of Jewish life Russian city in the first decades of century. It possesses intrinsic worth poetic utterance, as an autobiograph tale that is vivid, touching and en able. Although Bella Chagall's special titude was more in the direction of graphic than the architectural, there i inner dramatic development in t sketches. But, like her husband, she essentially a painter (an artist gifted sensitive sight; her medium, however the word, the image-evoking word. pictures are fresh and novel—and a as with her husband—are "Jewish Jewish setting. Bella is in the comm bath-house and this is the way she the bath-woman: "With both hands

ally surrounds me, as if I were her Sabbath candles, which she is about ss." The benedication of the candles parently one of her sweetest mem- — as it is with all of us whose lives been "secularized" — and she re- to it frequently. Her mother is ng the candles and she includes in enediction the names of her hus- her father, her mother, her chil- and as Bella's name is mentioned, s what it means to her: "Now my too falls into the flame of the es." There is hardly a page that is not lighted up with a vivid description, an original metaphor.

Mark Chagall's drawings are not "illustrations" added to the text, but are almost a part of the text. They do not "enhance" its beauty, but sustain it and add a dimension to the stories even as the stories give depth to the drawings. These drawings are more "realistic" than Mr. Chagall's work usually is, but are not "photographic"; they are "quaint," and wonderfully Jewish in their subject-matter and conception.

ISRAEL KNOX

## REALITIES AND VALUES

(Continued from Page 8)

appreciation of the religious needs odern Jewry and his zeal in endeav- to satisfy them.

PIERRE VAN PAASSEN HAS ordained a minister of the Unitarian th. The interesting thing about this ation is that it resulted from the nition of the service to religion that Paasen had rendered as a layman. reign correspondent and author, he ver a doughty champion of truth, e and compassion in human rela- a militant fighter in the service of Kingdom. With prophetic candor s been pleading the cause of all the and downtrodden peoples of the That includes us Jews. His voice reminding the Big Powers among United Nations of their "Forgotten the Jewish people. The Unitarian th has honored itself in conferring ation upon him. May his new posi- ffer further and enlarged opportuni- or serving God and his fellow men.

IN A RECENT ISSUE, WE COM- d favorably on the tendency of our rabbinical colleges to enlarge the scope of their activities and offer courses designed to prepare graduates for serving the Jewish community in other ways as well as in the capacity of rabbis of congregations. Today we are happy to note the first recognition by a communal agency of the need for intensive training in the Jewish religious tradition as a qualification for public services other than those conventionally associated with the rabbinate. The American Jewish Congress announces establishment of five annual fellowships valued at $2,500 each for reserach in contemporary social, political and economic problems as they affect Jews. The recipients of the fellowships will work with the various technical commissions of the American Jewish Congress. The fellowships are to be awarded to graduates of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Yeshivah University, and the Jewish Institute of Religion, all in New York, and to those of the Hebrew Theological College in Chicago and the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## A Problem of Jewish Observance

Sirs:

I should like an answer to the following problem. It has annoyed me and no doubt many other Jewish young men and women. It was brought more sharply to the fore by Sidney Morgenbesser in his article, "Is Orthodoxy Consistant with Democracy?" (Oct. 5, 1945).

He states:

"Fundamental assumptions are not easily changed but, when no one actually lives according to them, why take for granted that they are necessarily correct?"

Is it going to be up to the individual Jew to decide for himself what tenets he or she will live up to? As yet we have no Jewish community. Who is going to decide that this or that doctrine or law is outmoded?

This has been hit home to me just recently when I became engaged. My fiancee stated that she would keep a kosher house only because I deserved it and for no other reason. She points her finger at numerous young Jewish families and older ones too who do not observe *kashrut*. Can she not take the stand and state, since a great number (I cannot quote figures, but notice must be taken that they are numerous), of families do not observe the laws of *kashrut* the dietary rules are not necessarily desirable and it isn't logical to be burdened by them? Just where will or shall the line be drawn?

LT. H. S., *United States Army.*

A distinction should be made between law and ritual. To be sure, in Jewish tradition no such distinction exists. But if Jewish law is to function in modern life, we must distinguish between regulations affecting the relations of human beings to one another and those which apply to ritual and worship. Laws affecting human relations of Jews to one another should be developed by democratically elected Jewish communal agencies and should be binding on all Jews. But ritual observances cannot be subject to communal control without violating the principle of freedom of conscience. That does not mean that traditional observances should be lightly discarded. They need, however, to be evaluated according to reasonable criteria. The Reconstructionist pamphlet, "Toward a Guide to Jewish Ritual Usage," attempts to define some of these criteria of evaluation.

With regard to the specific question of *kashrut*, there is considerable division of opinion among Reconstructionists on the extent to which it should be observed in det
regard to its general observance, the
referred to says in part: "The mos
value of conforming to traditional di
ulations, irrespective of their specifi
is that this conformity serves as a
self-identification with the Jewish g
its ideal aims. . . . Psychologically t
regulations, although lacking in intrin
have functioned for most observant
effective symbols of a disciplined l
Jewish religion." In view of vario
disadvantages to the detailed obse
some of the dietary rules, it is urged
"should endeavor to observe as mar
traditional regulations as he can obse
out frustrating what to him are mo
tant permanent interests."

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## On the Color Line in Jewish

Sias:

Your item in Realities and Value
11th advocating the removal of b
social equality between Whites and N
America," is very interesting and nob

Would you, however, go so far a
mit Negro Jews to enter our semin
study for the rabbinate? You know,
edly, that there are thousands of Negr
country professing our faith.

I heard, not long ago, a high offici
of the largest seminaries in this coun
cynically and facetiously, of an incid
a Negro Jew had applied for admissi
school. The applicant was discoura
pursuing his calling. If I recall co
was done in a courteous and tactf
but done nevertheless. He was denied
opportunity. His application was no
on the basis of merit and capability

Do you condemn such action?

ALFRED J.

Our answer is: yes. This must not
be construed as an indictment against
binical college which excluded the
Negro in question, since we do not
the circumstances of the case. Whi
cants to rabbinic colleges have also
cluded. If the exclusion, however, w
on his race or color, it is to be co
White Jews ought to make more of
to bring the Negro Jewish commun
the orbit of Jewish life.